

On January 14, 2021, Governor Baker signed into law what became Public Housing Notice(PHN) 2021-1. Local Housing Authorities and Officials of Massachusetts Cities and Towns were notified on February 17, 2021. That law created a Tenant Member to the Local Housing Authority(LHA) Board of Directors. That new Board Member would be appointed by the Selectmen for the Town or City where the LHA was located. A list of candidates drawn from the recognized Local Tenant Organization(LTO) from each LHA would be submitted to the Town or City to review and make the appointment. Where no recognized LTO existed, the Local Housing Authority(LHA) would notify the all the residents of the opportunity. Each LTO may submit a list of 2-5 names of tenants who are eligible for appointment.

There are no directions on what the LTO should do if they receive more than 5 applicants. Who decides which five to move forward. A serious flaw.

The Arlington Housing Authority(AHA) had three recognized Tenant Associations, one in process of being certified, and one being created. AHA sent out notices of the opportunity to three recognized tenant association presidents, one unrecognized tenant association president and mailed a notice to ALL the residents of Menotomy Manor that had no LTO at the time. Since the Cusack LTO was not certified, all the residents there should have received a notice from the AHA. That did not happen. Another flaw. These went out in the middle of May. If all the residents of AHA were notified properly, there could be as many as 25 candidates submitted to the Select Board.

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One LTO did nothing, two LTO's put up 8 ½ by 11 signs on a cluttered bulletin board, and one notified 30 residents at a meeting three weeks before the application deadline of July 15, 2021. Less than 25% of the 515 residents of 4 LTO's were properly notified. Only the Tenant Association presidents received a mailed notice. Another serious flaw.

The Town received only 8 candidates for consideration by the Town Selectmen. 5 came from Menotomy Manor where ALL the 176 residents were notified of the opportunity. The other three candidates are all "presidents" of just 2 LTO's. Those three are supposed to be culled from over 500 residents who were never properly notified of the opportunity. Those three candidates are clearly opportunists trying to take advantage of a totally corrupt, flawed process at the LTO level. The LTO's never properly notified ALL the residents they are supposed to serve.

Any further action on this seriously flawed process should be tabled until these issues are cleared up or declared legal and in keeping with how the Town chooses to do its business.

The impact of the Town's action has long term consequences involving a 4.5 million dollar taxpayer funded operation.

Respectfully submitted,

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